

his owne light, and the light of others also.

Here therefore the Lord doth teach mē to auoide such discommodities, and annoyances, as many through rashnesse, and for want of discretion do fall into, for the Lordes people must be a wise people. And God would not haue thee to helpe thy neighbour without any care to saue thy selfe: for although he hath said. *Loue thy neighbour as thy selfe*, Deut. 4. 6. yet he neuer said loue thy neighbour better thē thy selfe, or loue thy selfe lesse then thy neighbour, but loue him as thy selfe, that is, helpe him and saue thy selfe too, or else thou shouldest loue him and hate thy selfe, which in the same wordes is condemned. For this end and purpose it hath pleased the Lord that dwelleth in the heauens, to stoupe downe so low, as to take order for our businesse here vpon earth, that we following his orders, it might go well with vs, and our children for euer.

And this counsell concerning Suerties: though it be an oeconomicall thing, yet it is not a base thing as some



*Thomas Milne. 1692.*

# A CAVEAT FOR SVERTIES.

Two Sermons of Suerti-  
ship, made in Bristoll,  
*by VV. Burton.*



LONDON

Printed by Richard Field, for Tobie  
Cooke dwelling in Paules Church-  
yard, at the signe of the  
Tygers-head.

1593.

ANALYSIS  
FOR SVERTIES.

Two sections of 2500  
Ship, made in B.M.C.  
by W. Burton.



LONDON

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# A CAVEAT FOR SVERTIES.

Prou. 6.

1. My sonne, if thou be Suerty for thy neighbour, and hast stricken hands vwith the straunger.
2. Thou art snared vwith the vvordes of thy mouth: thou art euen taken vwith the vvordes of thy own mouth.
3. Do this now, my sonne, and deliuer thy selfe: seeing thou art come into the hand of thy neighbour, go and humble thy selfe and sollicite thy friends.
4. Giue no sleepe to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eye liddes.
5. Deliuer thy selfe as a Doe, frō the hād of the hunter, & as a bird from the hande of the fowler.



His text is a schoole, wher-  
in Suerties are taught to flie  
such discommodities and  
annoyaunces as common-  
ly come to Suerties by vn-

1. Tim. 4.  
16.

Psal. 119.

discretenesse and rashnesse. And it may be called the Suerties text, because it provideth for the securitie of Suerties, as Suerties provide for the securitie of others, wherein almightie God giueth counsell vnto Suerties as vnto his children, which if they follow: then are they sure to stand when other are like to fall. Therefore as *S. Paul* saith to *Timothy* in an other case. *Take heede to thy selfe & to learning, and continue therein, for in so doing thou shalt saue thy selfe & them that heare thee.* So, I say, to Suerties, take heed to your selues and to your heauenly Fathers counsell, and continue therein, for in so doing you shall saue, both your selues and others. The candle that is carried in a lâterne, shall light many cādels, & yet loose no part of his owne light, be the winde neuer so boisterous, but that candle that is opē to the weather, a litle puffe of winde, or one drop of raine shal put it out, that it can neither giue light to others nor to it selfe. So, he to whom the word of God is a lanterne, & a light, shall helpe himselfe and others, when he that ventureth without it, shall put out his

his owne light, and the light of others also.

Here therefore the Lord doth teach mē to auoide such discommodities, and annoyances, as many through rashnesse, and for want of discretion do fall into, for the Lordes people must be a wise people. And God would not haue thee to helpe thy neighbour without any care to saue thy selfe: for although he hath said. *Loue thy neighbour as thy selfe*, Deut. 4. 6. yet he neuer said loue thy neighbour better thē thy selfe, or loue thy selfe lesse then thy neighbour, but loue him as thy selfe, that is, helpe him and saue thy selfe too, or else thou shouldest loue him and hate thy selfe, which in the same wordes is condemned. For this end and purpose it hath pleased the Lord that dwelleth in the heauens, to stoupe downe so low, as to take order for our businesse here vpon earth, that we following his orders, it might go well with vs, and our children for euer.

And this counsell concerning Suerties: though it be an oeconomicall thing, yet it is not a base thing as some

haue thought the spirite of God to occupie himselfe in base matters . But by this we may perceiue , how carefull the spirite of God is for vs, in all things , he is become our ouerseer, and would keepe vs euen in the smallest things , that we are to take in hād. He hath giuen vs this warning, as if he were an ouerseer of our money , and our losses: but yet he doth not so much prouide for the benefite of the body as of the soule . God hath set down a perfect rule for all things, which is able to make the man of God perfect: yea , he hath vouchsafed to stoupe so low , as to come home into euery mans familie, and to haue a care of our domesticall affaires , that though we care not how we go to worke, yet our heavenly Father hath a care, that we should walke according to his word, which he hath set vp , to be a lanterne to our fecte , and a light vnto our pathes.

Three conclusions.

This being true, as it is most true, we may be bold to lay downe these three conclusions following . First, that the word of God containeth a perfect rule for the ordering of all our affaires : And what-

whatsoever is requisite either to be beleueed in matters of doctrine, or to be practised in matters of manners, either towards God or man, is from that fountain to be drawen, and in that schoole most exactly, and perfectly taught.

1. What  
soever is  
necessarie  
to salua-  
tion.

It teacheth the King to raigne, the Iudge to giue iudgemēt, the Magistrate to beare rule, & the subiect to obey. The Minister from hence may learne how to preach, and the people may learne how to heare. Here the Captaine may learne how to pitch his battaile, and the com-  
mon souldier is taught his dutie. If thou be a husband, here thou mayst learne how to rule thy wife, and the wife may see in this glasse how to obey, and to please her husband. The word of God hath layd downe most absolute instructions for fathers and children, for masters and seruants, for superiours, and inferiours, and for all estates. In prosperitie and aduersitie, in sicknesse and in health, in warre & in peace, in youth & in old age, in the field & at home, at bed and at bord, in all places and at all times, thou mayst here learne how to behaue

Math. 3.

Esay. 3.

I. Cor. II.

Prou. 6.

thy selfe. Here is order taken for our eating and drinking, for feasting and fasting, for sportes and pastimes, how to recreate the body and how to solace the minde, for the apparell we put on, and for the very haire of our head, for the gestures of our body, and the whole behaviour of our life. It hath taken order for buying and selling, for borrowing and lēding, for giuing & taking, for finding and loosing, there is a rule layd downe in the word of God how to become Suertie, and how to escape the daunger of Suertiship, here may the man of God be instructed, in a word whatsoeuer belongeth to pollicie, to ciuilitie, or to Christianitie, for this life or for the life to come, it is most exquisitly, most plentifully, and most plainly layd downe in the booke of God. If thou delightest to read Histories or Chronicles, read Gods booke. If thou wouldest see the creation of the world, and how the same is preserved, and the nature of the creatures, read Gods booke. If thou louest to tell, and to heare of famous Kings & Captaines, of wonderfull battailes and victories, of  
 excellent

excellent Iudges, and Magistrates, of renowned Preachers, and Prophets, of constant professours and martyrs, peruse the booke of God. If thou wouldest see common-wealthes flourishing, and going to ruine with the causes of both, be acquainted with the booke of God. If thou wouldest see the Church of God in her infancie, and in her riper age, in her rags and in her robes, clensed and polluted, increasing and decreasing, with her enemies, and her friends, be not straunge to the word of God. Would any see the noble actes of God, the wonderfull deliverances of Gods people, and the horrible confusion of wicked men? let him hearken to the word of God. If thou wouldest know thy maker thy redeemer, thy sanctifier: if thou wouldest know the vanitie, the miserie, and the wickednesse of the world, with the subtilties & sleightes of Sathan: if thou wouldest know the happinesse, the ioyes, and felicities of heauen and finde the way thither: if thou wouldest know the paines & tormēts of hell, and how to escape them, enquire of *Moses* and the Prophets and

10 *A Caueat for Snerties.*

they will tell thee. What shall I say? for one thing ouer-taketh another in such sort, that confusion wil ouerwhelme vs, before we can tell what riches are contained in the storehouse of Gods booke, for who can found the depth of a bottomlesse sea? but in a word: if a man desire to know himselfe thoroughly within and without in all his affaires betweene God and man, let him behold himselfe in the glasse of Gods booke, and when we haue so done, we will say as the woman of Samaria said, whē she had reasoned with the Lord Iesus. *Behold one that hath told me all that euer I did, and more, euē al that euer I should do.* Therefore let no man maruell, what we meane (being the Ministers of God) to speake of such and such matters, or to medle in the businesse and dealings of mē, for the word of God doth take order for all our affaires, neither wonder who told tales of thee, as the king of Aram did, for the word doth rife the hiddē corners of the heart. But how are our aduersaries the Papistes deceiued, which hold that the word of God doth not containe all things

Ioh. 4.

things necessarie to the saluation of the elect? but ô Lord, what spirite of Atheisme and blasphemie doth possesse those men, which durst compare *Plines* Philosophie with the bookes of *Moses*, *Aristotles* Ethickes and Politiques, with the Prouerbes of *Salomō*? *Marcus Aurelius* with *Marke* the Euangelist? *Marlins* Prophecies, with the Prophecies of *Esay*, and the rest? the eloquence of *Cicero*, or *Demostenes* with the eloquēce of the holy ghost in the mouths of the Prophets and Apostles, and in all the Scriptures? or any doctours or fathers before the Doctours and Fathers of the Bible? For what is lead to gold? what is water to wine? what is ignorance to learning? what is darknesse to light? what is the chaffe to the wheate? what is falsehood to truth? what is earth to heauen? & what comparifon can there be betweene God and man? and so much for that point.

Secōdly, we may learne here that except God doth teach vs, & direct vs, as it were by line & by leuell, by precept vpō precept, by litle and by litle (as the Prophet speaketh) we know not how to or-

2.  
By nature  
we know  
not what  
to do.

Gen.3.

Gen.4.

1.Sam.15.

der rightly our common businesse, and  
dayly affaires of this life, but we shalbe  
snared, and entangled with our owne  
words, or ouertake one way or other, to  
our own hinderance, so foolish & igno-  
rant is man by nature. And againe whē  
we are snared, and brought into danger,  
we know not how to helpe our selues,  
except the Lord do teach vs, but if he  
should let vs alone, to shift for our selues,  
we would neuer leaue vntill we had  
wrapped our selues in ten times more  
danger thē we were in before. *Adam* ha-  
uing transgressed, will thinke to hide  
himselſe frō God in the trees of the gar-  
den, & to couer his nakednesse with fig  
leaues. His faulte he will excuse by the  
fault of another, and rather (then fayle)  
he will not sticke to lay it vpō God him-  
selfe, so foolish was *Adam*, and so are all  
his posteritie. *Cain* will incurre the ven-  
geance of God by killing of his brother,  
& when he hath done, he thinkes to saue  
himselſe by outfacing of the matter: but  
it will not be, and so do all *Cains* brood,  
like an hypocrite, and then (like a foole)  
he

he will say he ment no harme, he did it  
of a good intent, and such fooles are we  
all by nature. We are become like foolish  
marriners which will runne vpon the  
rockes to auoide the sandes. We are be-  
come like *Sisera*, who flying for his life, Iudg. 4.  
will runne into *Iaells* tent for succour, 20. 21.  
where the nayle and the hammer is pre-  
pared for his head, and whē he thinketh  
to take vp his rest, and sleepe most sōd-  
ly then is he nearest his destruction. We  
are like children and sicke folkes, which  
do desire nothing so much, as those  
things which may hurt them. We are  
become like the Philistines, which were  
most merry when the house was ready Iudg. 16.  
to fall vpon their heades. 25.  
We are secure  
like the men of Laish which mistrusted  
nothing, vntill the children of Dan did Iudg. 18.  
smite them with the edge of the sword, 27.  
and burnt their Citie with fire. Now, if  
we be so foolish for this life, how foolish  
are we for the life to come? we see that  
except our heauenly father doth direct  
vs by his counsell, as he led Israell by the  
cloud, and warne vs by his messengers;  
as he warned the wisemē by his Angell,

Note.

Gen. 3.

Prou. 5.

we know not how to order our commō  
 businesse, & the affaires of this life: much  
 lesse do we know by nature how to serue  
 the Lord our God, and how to worship  
 him aright. If by all our cunning which  
 we haue by nature we cānot auoide the  
 snares of men, how shall we thinke by  
 our naturall wit and cunning to auoide  
 the snares of the deuill? if we know not  
 how to get out of bodily dāger without  
 Gods direction, how shall we thinke to  
 get out of spiritual dāger without Gods  
 direction? for there is no craftinesse like  
 spiritual craftinesse, as there was no beast  
 so subtill as the serpent. Againe, if we cā  
 not of our selues get out of trouble whē  
 we are in trouble, how do we thinke of  
 our selues to winde out of the tempta-  
 tions of Sathan except God do teach vs.  
 For all the wayes of sinne, are like the  
 wayes of a harlot, *which are moueable*  
 (saith Salomō) & thou canst not know thē,  
 that is, there is such varietie and store of  
 them to bewitch men, that we can ne-  
 uer know which is which, so in the  
 crooked wayes of the deuill there be so  
 many windings and turnings, that whē  
 a man

a man is once in, he cānot finde the way out againe, vntil the Lord do bring him out againe. And yet euery one thinketh that he may aduenture vpon any temptation, and he shall easily get out againe when he list by his mother wit, &c. and no maruell, for it is the easiest thing in the word for a man to deceiue his owne soule, and so much for the 2. point.

Thirdly, we may learne here, that al-  
mightie God doth not leaue his childrē  
to theselues, but (cōsidering how simple  
they are by nature) he doth take paines  
to teach them, how and which way to  
helpe themselves in euery action, and  
for this cause hath he set down rules, and  
instructions for all their affaires in his  
word. Our heauenly Father (I say) doth  
not adopt any in Christ Iesus to be his  
sonnes and daughters, and then leaue  
thē to theselues to be guided (or rather  
beguiled) by the counsell of their owne  
hearts, nor by custome, nor by world-  
ly reason, nor by the examples of their  
forefathers in any thing, whether it con-  
cerneth this life, or the life to come, for  
then there were no difference betweene

3.

God doth  
not leaue  
his chil-  
dren to  
theselues,

- the elect, and the reprobate, whom God hath deliuered vp vnto a reprobate minde, to do those things that are not conuenient, because they regarded not to know God. But the Lord wil instruct his children in the way, which he hath appointed for them, and wil guide them with his eye. Yea, with his counsell he will guide them, and afterward receiue them to glory, and therefore will he guide them with his counsell, that he may receiue them into glory: because (ordinarily) no man is glorified in heauen, that is not first sanctified by the word of God vpon earth. Therefore doth the Prophet *Dauid* call the word of God *a lanterne to his feete, and a light vnto his pathes*, as if the Lord should go before his children with a candle and a lanterne to guide their feete into the wayes of peace, to teach vs, that if we were as wise, and as holy as *Dauid* was: yet without the discretion of Gods word, we do but grope in the darke like the men of Sodom, and go we cannot tell whither, like the mē of Samaria. In another place, he calleth the statutes of the Lord his coun-

couſellers, as if he knew not what to do without thē. And ſurely ſo it was, for in another place (when he was ruled by his owne heart & affectiō) he ſaith, that he plaied both the foole & the beaſt, vntill he went to ſchoole in the houſe of God, where he learned that holy wiſedome, which he had not before: ſo that this point is manifeſt and plaine, that God doth not leaue his childrē to themſelues in any thing, but (as a moſt mercifull father) doth teach and inſtruct them by his word and ſpirite. And therefore who ſoeuer ſhall either reſuſe to be ordered by the ſame, or ſhal prefer his own wiſedome, or any mans workes before it, or cōpare them with it, may iuſtly ſuſpect himſelfe to be none of Gods children vntill he repent: for the children of God knowing their owne ignorāce & weakneſſe euery manner of way, are glad to be counſelled by their heavenly father.

But what? hath the lord takē order for Suertſhip, and all other of our worldly buſineſſe? and hath he not likewise takē order for his owne buſineſſe? will he not leaue vs to our ſelues in the leſſer things,

& wil he leaue vs to our selues in greater matters? will he not let vs serue one another otherwise then himselfe hath appointed, and will he be content that we shall serue his maiestie, otherwise then he hath appointed himselfe? Would he giue a paterne and direction to his people for making of the Tabernacle, and building of the Tēple, to that end that they might do euery thing or any thing thereunto belonging as they listed? no surely, and therfore he himselfe set down an order for the very vessells, for the ashe-pannes, the beesomes, the flesh-hooks, yea and euery pinne about the worke, beyōd which paterne they might not go: much lesse hath he left his worship vnder the Gospell vnto our discretion, and he that is so carefull as that he would not leaue men to themselves, and to their own deuises in matters of Suer-tiship, & affaires of the world, surely he would neuer be so carelesse as to leaue men to themselves, in the ordering and gouerning of his Church. To conclude, he that hath in his word set downe orders for oeconomical matters, no doubt, but

but he hath also in his word set downe orders for Ecclesiasticall matters, for seeing as he will not allow men to haue more care for the ordering of other mē's houses then their owne, farre be it from vs, that we should thinke so of the Lord, that he would haue greater care for the ordering of our houses, then for the gouernement of his owne house which is his Church, but as we finde certaine rules and perpetuall directions for the one, so shall we finde in the same booke, most certaine rules, and perpetuall instructions for the other: if we do not put some thing before our eyes, and say, we cānot see. And so much for this 3. point. Now we will come to the matter of Suertiship it selfe.

*My sonne, if thou be Suertie for thy neighbour, &c.*

Concerning Suertiship we will consider vpon this text of vi. points.

1. What Suertiship is. 2. How many sorts of Suerties there be. 3. Whether it belawfull for Christiā's to become Suerties one for another. 4. How men in *Salomons* time became Suerties. 5. How

men are hindred by Suertiship. 6. We will see what counsell God giueth vnto Suerties for their safetie.

What it is  
to be a  
Suertie.

As touching the first point . To become a Suertie , is nothing else but by word or writing or by pledge to make another sure (so farre as man can) of that which before he was not sure of: or to put a man out of doubt so farre as law and equitie will require ) for the receiuing, or enioying, or recouering of some thing, whereof he stood in doubt before, & therefore it is called securitie. I reckon pledges amongst Suerties , because a pledge is a kinde of Suertie , for if the principall do faile, the Suertie must answer the debt, but when Suerties cānot be gotten, then men lay somewhat to pledge , that is better or as good as the debt commeth vnto . And if the partie faileth , the pledge must answer the debt, sometime a pledge is layd , because the thing is so small that one would be loth to haue his friend come in bandes, or giue his word for the same , and yet that which is but a smal matter amōgest rich men, may be a great matter amōgest poore

poore men. And sometimes pledges are vsed in things vnlawful & dishonest, & that is when mē do promise a thing vpō such conditions as they are ashamed to make knowē vnto any, as *Iudah* promised his daughter in law *Thamar* a kid of the goates vpō cōditiō that he might lye with her, but he knew her not, *well* (saith *Thamar*) *if thou wilt giue me a pledge till thou send it*, that is, if thou wilt put me in good securitie, and that must be by some pledge at this time, so he gaue her his signet, his cloake, and his stasse for a pledge, that if the kid came not, they must answere the matter. And this was such a matter, that when she was gone, *Iudah* was ashamed to send after her for his pledge, he had rather loose it, then to recouer it with so much infamie, as he was sure would ensue. The end of Suer-tiship and pledges, &c. is that all men might haue their owne, without which no trade, nor traffique, nor Suertie, nor peace could be preserued amongst mē, and so much for the first point.

2.  
How ma-  
ny sorts of  
Suerties  
there be.

Now as touching the second point, in a word. There be diuerse kindes of

Suerties, for some are Suerties for mens persons, that they shalbe forth cōming by a day, either to answere such matters as shalbe obiected against them before some Iudge, or to receiue such punishment as is already awarded for his misdemeanour. In such cases commonly the prison is the best Suerty. Some are Suerties for mens debtes and bargaines, that they shalbe payd, and performed accordingly as they be made and promised. Some are Suerties for mens behauour, that it shalbe good, honest, and peaceable towards all men in generall, or towards some one especiall partie, and towards his goods and familie: and this is cōmōly required, of notorious offenders, in cases of flandering, and quarrelling against a mans person, or deprauing of a mā's good name, lest a mans good name should be more impeached, and his credite more hindred then it was before. Men in such cases, become Suerties for their friendes, in hope of their amendment. And Suertiship in such cases, do more binde a mans tounge, then the prison can, because most men (if there be  
but

but common ciuilitie in them) will forbear many times, for their friendes sake lest they should be endamaged to whō they are so much beholding, then for all the extremitie that can be vsed.

There is no man so wicked, but he shall finde some body ready to promise for him, as one theefe for another, or one bankrupt for another, or one beastly person for the honestie of another, or one rakehel for another: now this it but a mockery, as if one should say: Aske my fellow if I be theefe, or if I be dishonest, or if I be not a mā of my word, &c. And therefore haue Christian lawes well provided that euery mans word or bond is not to be admitted, neither shall all persons and causes passe and repasse vnder Suerties, for though some might flie to the hornes of the alter, & haue the benefite of a priuiledged place: yet *loab* the man of bloud shalbe smitten before the alter, neither shall the sanctuarie saue his life when he flieth vnto it, much lesse shall any Suerties giue their word for him. We are all bound, to do what we can to winne men to God, and to per-

1. King. 2.  
30.

swade all men vnto holy obedience, but to answer vnto God whatsoeuer his law can charge vs withall, is a thing which belongeth onely and properly to the Lord Iesus Christ that great Suertie of mankind, and so much for the 2. point.

The law-  
fulnesse of  
Suertiship.

Now, for the lawfulnessse of Suertiship, we are to know, that it is a dutie both Christian and necessarie, and therefore it cannot be vnlawfull.

Mat.

That it is a dutie of Christianitie, may appeare two wayes, first, by the rule of charitie, secōdly by the exāples of godly men, which haue practised the same. The rule of charitie we know: and that is to do for others as we would be done vnto our selues. If therefore Christians would be glad of a Suertie when they are in necessitie, then Christians must also (when neede requireth) do so much for others.

To become Suertie for mēs persons, is no doubt a worke of charity, for what if mē be arrested of mallice, & euill will as many be? or what if such extreme actiōs be layd by vnreasonable men vpon thy neighbour, as shall make a man afrayde

to speake for him, as many do? or what if such practises be vsed of purpose to dis-credite thy neighbour in a strange place where he is not knowen? shall it not be then lawful to relieue thy neighbour by thy word vntil his cause may be knowē? verely, if thou wilt not rescue him, and shrowde him vnder the shadow of thy wings, but let the prison consume his body and wicked men make a pray of his goods, thou thy selfe mayst one day come into the like predicament, and then thou wilt cōfesse that Suertiship in such a case is a worke of charitie.

But further, what if thy Christian brother be arrested vpon suspition of euill? when notwithstanding he is innocent? if he go to prison his good name is called into question, if he lye in prison his goods go to wracke, his health is in hazard, his life is in danger, both he and his are like to smart for it. Now if any man thinke it vnlawfull to giue his neighbour leaue to refresh himselfe, and to saue his life, his goodes, and his good name, vnder the shadow of his credite & protection of his promise, let him ima-

Gen.

Ioseph.

gine himsele to be the man that is so handled, and then he will confesse that Suertiship for mēs persons is a worke of charitie, and therefore lawfull. But yet further, what if thy Christian brother be falsely accused, and wrongfully imprisoned (as *Ioseph* was) and it is yet vnknown? is it not lawfull, nay, are we not bound in such a case to redeeme the libertie of our brother, with our word or bonds, if it may be? or what if a man had bene Suertie, for *Iosephs* appearance if his libertie might haue bene obtained, shall we say that such a man had sinned? God forbid, if any thinke so, let him know that *Iosephs* case may one day proue his case, and then he will confesse that Suertiship for mens persons, is a worke of charitie and therefore lawfull.

But what if my brother be in debt, & must either go to prison or finde Suerties, for the payment of the debt by a day? Surely if he be a Christian, he is thy brother, & how canst thou see thy Christian brother by languishing in prison, where he doth onely spend, but not get? when if he were abroad to worke in his calling,

calling he might both helpe himselfe,  
and pay his debtes. Imagine that rich  
*Iob* were the man, when all was gone frō *Iob*.  
him, and he left as naked in the world, as  
he was when he came into the world,  
what if his creditors should then take  
him by the throate, and say, pay that  
thou owest, or else put me in sufficient  
Suerties, lest thou go to prison (as the  
manner of many is, when they see their  
debtors fall in decay: ) shall we say that  
he should haue sinned against the law  
of charitie (which is the rule of Christia-  
nitie) that should haue giuen his word  
with *Iob* for the payment of his debt by  
such a time and in such a reasonable ma-  
ner as might be agreed vpon? If this be  
not sufficient to perswade thee, remem-  
ber that no man is so high, but may be  
brought low, as there is no full sea, but  
hath his ebbing, and *Iobs* case may proue  
thy case, and then thou wilt hold that  
Suertiship is a dutie both necessarie and  
Christian, and therefore very lawfull. But  
put case that my brother hath offended  
somebody by word or deede, and must  
either finde Suerties for his good beha-

uiour, or else go to prison : Surely, if he be sorie for his offence , and if he shall craue the helpe of thy word for his enlargement, brotherly kindnesse wil perswade thee to succour him, & the law of loue will forbid thee to denie him. And if this be not sufficiēt to moue thee, then remember that he which thinkes that he stādeth may fall, and when his case shall proue thy case, thou wilt then plead for thy selfe, and say that except thou mayst be at libertie, there can be no triall of thy amendement, and except thou mayst be bailed by Suerties, thou canst not be enlarged , and then thou wilt thinke that Suertiship is a dutie both Christian and necessarie in euery common wealth, and therefore lawfull , and thus we see that Suertiship is proued lawfull by the rule of charitie.

As this point is sufficiently proued by the rule of charitie : so it is no lesse confirmed by sundry examples of holy men which feared God . When *Iacob* was loth to part from his sonne *Beniamin*: first *Reuben* entreateth him, and offereth himselfe to become Suertie for his  
safe

safe rerurne, and for his greater securitie,  
 he leaueth his owne sonnes as a pledge  
 in stead of *Beniamin*, if his offer would  
 haue bene accepted. Afterward cometh  
*Judah* to entreat *Iacob*, *I will be Suertie* Gen 43. 9.  
*for him* (saith he): *of mine hand shalt thou*  
*require him, if I bring him not to thee, and*  
*set him before thee, then let me beare the*  
*blame for euer.* Againe, *Paule*, perswa-  
 ding *Philemon* to receiue his old seruant  
*Onesimus*, doth offer himselte to become  
 Suertie for him, *If he hath hurt thee* (saith  
 the Apostle) *or oweth thee ought, that put* Phile. ver.  
*on mine accountes.* What is that but thus 18.  
 much, if he be not able to pay thee, I will  
 pay thee for him.

Last of all, our Sauour Christ doth Luke. 10.  
 not onely approue it, but he seemeth al- 35.  
 so to commaund the same, in the parable  
 of the Samaritane and the man that fell  
 amongst theeues. For the Samaritane  
 (seeing the man wounded by theeues)  
 came vnto him, powred wine and oyle  
 into his wounds, he set him on his beast,  
 he brought him to his Inne, and made  
 prouisiō for him, he gaue his hoste some  
 money in hand, and bad him see that he

lacked nothing that was needefull for him, and (saith he) looke what thou prouidest for him, take my word for it, I will see thee recompenced for it. This man did the part indeed of a neighbour (saith the Lawyer that came to tempt the Lord Iesus) then sayd the Lord Iesus, go, and do thou likewise.

By these reasons and examples the lawfulnessse of Suertiship is sufficiently established. By which we may easily perceiue what sinne they comit against God, and how much those mē do offend against the rule of charitie, which do hold it as a thing vnlawfull. Such are those men which ytterly refuse it being required thereunto, because (forsooth) they haue made a vow to the contrary; or they haue forsworne it, or they haue bounde themselues to such a friend of theirs, and he againe is bound againe to him, that neither of them both shal euer become Suerties for any mā while they liue, so that if their owne father or mother require this dutie at their handes, they haue but a cold sute of it, for their child hath bound himselfe to the contrary.

ry. But let vs see: is it lawfull for a Christian to binde himselfe by vow, or by oth, or by bond from a dutie so necessarie, so charitable, and so Christian? many good men haue bound themselues from sinne, as *Iob* tooke bonde of his eyes that *Iob*. they should not wantonly behold a mayde: and *Dauid* vowed to serue the Lord his God. And *Dauid* and *Daniell* both did as it were binde themselues to pray so many times a day to God, but we shall neuer read of any man fearing God, which did euer binde themselues from seruing of God. Men count it a shame, and so it is, to be bounde to the good behauour, but what a shame is it for a Christian to binde himselfe from performing the duties of a Christian? But because many are decayed by Suer- Obiect.  
tiship (they say) therefore haue they bound theselues from being Suerties for any man. By the same reason, why do they not also Answer.  
binde themselues from eating and drinking, because many men by eating and drinking do surfet themselues? Or why do they not binde themselues neuer to come neare any water, because some men

A&amp;

haue desperately drowned themselves, &c. but what flauerie, do these men endure, which haue bound themselves frō relieuing of others, and themselves like the Iewes which vowed neither to eate nor drinke, vntill they had killed *Paule*. For how can they with cōmon honestie denie their brother so Christian a dutie, so on the other side, with what faces can they craue any reliefe of any mā in their neede, seeing as they haue bounde themselves from helping of euery man what need soeuer he hath?

Prou. 17.  
18.  
Obiect.

But as the deuill had Scripture for that he said, so haue these mē too, for, *A man destitute of vnderstanding toucheth the hand, and becommeth Suertie for his neighbour*, saith *Salomon*. Therefore Suer-

Answer.

tiship is vnlawfull (said they) for euery one that becommeth Suertie for his neighbour is a foolish man, and voide of vnderstanding. But the reason halteth right downe, and if we shall make such a conclusion in other matters, we shall shew our selues to be destitute of vnderstanding indeed, for a man voide of vnderstanding, pulleth off his clothes, and

goeth into the water, to swimme before  
 he be taught, and perhaps is drowned:  
 is euery one therefore a foole that goeth  
 into the water to swimme? The deuill  
 confessed Christ to be the sonne of God:  
 is euery one therefore a deuill that con-  
 fesseth Christ to be the sonne of God? A  
 riotous person borroweth money of his  
 neighbour, and is in debt: is euery one  
 therefore a riotous person that bor-  
 roweth and oweth? Or, a mad man wal-  
 keth vp and downe with a sword: is e-  
 uery one therefore which walketh with  
 a sword become a mad man? Or, a schol-  
 ler of Cambridge goeth in blacke: ther-  
 fore is euery one that goeth in blacke  
 a scholler of Cambridge? and many moe  
 such absurde cōclusions might be made  
 like vnto that: but how feeble they are  
 who doth not see? But indēde *Salomons*  
 meaning is nothing lesse then to con-  
 demne Suertiship, but rather to shew  
 that it must be done with aduise, and  
 good deliberation, & not rashly we care  
 not for whom, nor for what. And if any  
 man thinke that there belōgeth no more  
 to the matter then to touch the hand &

Fallacia  
 accidētis.

to become Suertie, that man is a man destitute of vnderstanding, but yet euery one is not destitute of vnderstanding that becommeth Suertie, for wise men are wel aduised in that they do. So again on the oher side, some man that hath no loue to God, nor his neighbour refuseth to become Suertie for any mā, shall we now conclude that he which refuseth to become Suertie for euery one, hath no loue to God nor his neighbour? this cōclusion is but of a bad cōstitutio, and looketh with a wry mouth.

Obiect.

1. Cor. 13.  
5.7

But yet they do obiect, and say, that by the rule of charitie, one man ought to beleeeue another vpō his word, and charitie is not suspitious, and the Apostle saith, that loue thinketh no euil, but iudgeth the best, and hopeth the best, therefore if one promise payment, or if one promise appearance by a day, or if one promise amendement of his fault, we ought to beleeeue him without any further bōds, or Suerties: And if we do not, it is a signe that we suspect his credite, or his honestie, or that he will not do as he said, but will breake promise & so de-  
ceiue

ceiue vs, and if we thinke so of him, then we iudge vncharitably of him, for charitie is not suspicious. Now for an answer, this I say: First, as charitie is not suspiti- Answer.  
ous without cause, so charitie is not blockish, and foolish, whē there is cause, but doth and may learne to iudge of one thing by another. Our Sauour Christ would not commit himselfe vnto the Jewes, because he knew what was in mā: Ioh. 2. 24.  
shall we therefore say that our Sauour Christ brake the rule of charitie? so whē we know what is in men, we shall not breake the rule of charitie, though we do not commit our selues to the curtesie of all men, without the vse of some honest meanes for our safetie. Now that which he knew, was by his diuine knowledge without any signe or token, for he was God, and knew the hearts of all men, and therefore it is said, he needed not that any man should testifie of Vers. 25.  
man, for he knew what was in man: but he hath taught vs to iudge the tree by the frutes, that is, to know what is in mā, by his wordes and his deedes. Secondly:  
I answered, that charitie is not suspicious, 2. Answer.

but yet charitie worketh by ordinarie  
 meanes, and iudgeth according to the  
 working of meanes, & when one seeth a  
 smoke, he suspecteth presently that there  
 is fire, but what saith the Lord? *Can the*  
 Jerem. 13. *blacke more chāge his skinne? and the Leo-*  
 23. *pard his spots? the may ye also do good, that*  
*are accustomed to do euill, as if he should*  
*say it is impossible. Therefore if we see a*  
*man that hath accustomed to do euill,*  
*or that is a common lyer, a cōmon coso-*  
*ner and deceiuer, a common barriter, a*  
*common beast, &c. Charitie is not suspi-*  
*tious, but by the Lordes owne rule, we*  
*may doubt of his goodnesse, and we*  
*may suspect his credite and his honesty,*  
*&c. because he is accustomed to do euill.*  
*And because the Prophet saith that all*  
*men are lyers, therefore there is cause of*  
*suspitiō in all, yea and in our selues too.*  
*Thirdly, I answered, that this rule of the*  
*Apostle may be returned vpon them-*  
*selues, thus: Charitie is not suspicious, &*  
*loue thinketh no euill, but iudgeth and*  
 3. Answer. *hopeth the best. Therefore if their bro-*  
*ther shall require their word, or bonde*  
*in time of need, and shall promise them*  
 that

that it shall no way be a hinderance vnto them, they ought not to deny them for feare that they shall be driuen to answer the debt: for if they thinke of their Christian, that he will either runne away, or suffer the matter to fall vpon the head of his friend, then he iudgeth euill, and therefore vncharitably of his neighbour, & doth not (according to the rule of loue) iudge the best, & hope the best.

Last of all to this it may be answered, 4. Answer. that there ought to be (indeede) such faithfulnessse, such constancie, and such vpright and simple hearted dealing amongst men, that euery mans word should be as sure as his bonde, and the bonds of Suerties with him. But it is not so, and therefore were bondes, and Suerties appointed. There ought to be such trustinesse in seruants, and children, and in all commers and goers to mens houses, that nothing should neede to stand vnder locke and key, but there is not, therefore lockes and keyes were ordained. There ought to be such peace & vnitie amongst men, that there should neede no bearing of weapons, but there is not, therefore

weapons are ordained, and for this cause were walled Cities, strong holdes, and all prouision of warre appointed. If there were no coueting of other mens goods, and hatred of other mens persons, what need we haue doores and barres to our houses? if there were that peace and loue, which ought to be, what needed so many lawes, and so many lawyers amongst men. If *Adam* had kept his first innocencie, and puritie, shame had not entred with his transgression, and if shame had not come with sinne, he might still haue bene naked and neuer haue blushed at his nakednesse: but he did not keepe his first innocencie, therefore shame came vpon him and so apparell was ordained to couer his shame withall. So that all these meanes which are now appointed for mans honestie, for mans safetie, and securitie, what are they else but badges, & tokens of mans shame and dishonestie, of mans crueltie & trecherie? so we see how, sinne and deceit brought in Suertiship and Suertiship is a badge of sinne and deceit, when man kept not touch with God, God would neuer haue had any thing

Gen. 3.

Suertiship  
is a badge  
of treche-  
rie & de-  
ceit.

thing to do with him againe, neither would he trust him with any of his creatures except his own sonne Iesus Christ had become Suertie for man. And therefore, whē mē became trecherous against God, no maruell though they be so vnfaithful & full of trechery one against another: therefore there is no cause why we should be proude of our suerties, but rather take occasion thereby to bewaile that horrible corruption of *Adam*, and all *Adams* posteritie, the very name of a Suertie should humble vs, howsoeuer the Lord doth in mercy encline mens hearts vnto men. In a word, as the theefe hath no cause to be proude of his prison and fetters, so hath no man cause to be proude of suertiship, but yet that is lawfull to be vsed, which must also serue to humble vs, and so much for the lawfulnessse of Suertiship.

It should  
hūble vs.



# THE SECOND SERMON.



E haue heard already what Suertiship is, how many sortes of Suerties there be and the lawfulnessse of Suertiship, as also how selfe-loue doth play her part in those men, which do binde themselues from so necessarie, and so Christian a duty; we will now consider how it commeth to passe that so many men are hindred by it, yea and beggered by it, as by dayly experience we see in the world, then we will see how men in auncient time became Suerties, and lastly Gods counsell vnto Suerties for their safetie.

As touching the first point of these three: we are to know, that the God of all wisdom, and Lord of mercy hath not commanded any thing for the vndoing and destroying of men, but what-  
focuer

soeuer he hath ordained, is for the singular benefite and comfort of man: but such is our corruption, that we abuse all the ordinances of our most gracious God to our owne hinderance and destruction. Meates and drinckes were appointed to sustaine nature, but not to surfet nature, yet many do surfet of their excessiue eating and drinking, and immoderat dieting of themselves. Water is appointed for mē to wash themselves in, not to drowne themselves: yet many foole-hardie men by venturing too far haue bene drowned, when by taking heede they might haue bene saued. The horse is made to carrie, but if he be ouerladen he will sinke downe vnder the burden. And so is suertiship a burden which hath made manie to lie downe, but that was when the burden was too heauie, and themselves were too weake. Suertiship is like a deepe water and a mightie streame, that hath drowned some, & carried other some away (God knowes whither) that they could neuer recouer themselves againe, therefore, when a man seeth his neighbour in this

Luke 19.

deepe, let him do what he can to helpe him out, but so as hee may saue himselfe: let him not run in at all aduentures, but first feele the bottom as hee goeth, lest he be drowned together with his neighbour. *Zacheus* (because he is a little man, and of a low stature) must runne vp into a tree to see Christ as hee passed by, when tall men may goe vpon the plaine ground and see him. And the child must be carried in his fathers arms amidst the prease if he will see as much as his father: but if he will presume to goe vpon the ground aswel as his father, a thousand to one but the throng of people will beare him downe, and treade vpon him.

Some men wil by suertiship take vpon them to beare other men, when they had more neede to be borne themselves like children: Some are as little, and as low in credit, and welth, and abilitie euerie way, as *Zacheus* was in bodily stature, and yet they will presume to goe amongst the highest and strongest, when they had more neede clime vp into a tree to saue themselves: and hereof commeth

commeth all their ruine and decay: And to speake more plainlie, the cause why manie men are impouerished by suertiship is, because they are not so carefull and circumspect in giuing their word as they should be: Therefore (saith Salo-

mon) *A mā void of understanding toucheth the hand, and is suertie for his neighbour,*

Pro. 17. 18.

to shew that such matters must not rashly be taken in hand, but euerie man must vnderstand what he doth, and not promise rashlie, and vaingloriously we care neither what, nor yet for whom.

Therefore in another place hee saith,

*Take his garment that is suertie for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for the*

Pro. 20. 16.

*stranger, as if he were not to be trusted without a pledge that will promise hee care not for whom.* And he nameth [*his*

*garment:*] to shew, that if a man promise, he must performe his promise,

though it be to his owne hinderance, euen to the losse of the garment from his backe, which can worst be spared. And

therefore it standeth Christians in hand (which make a conscience of their word)

to take great heede both what they pro-

44 *A Caueat for Suerties.*

mise and for whom they giue their word. In all these places the Lords meaning is, that we must not so vnadvisedlie (as manie doo) giue our wordes, or passe our promise, for such deceiuers as care not whether euer or neuer their debtes be paid, and hauing once vnburdened themselues vppon other mens shoulders, would neuer trauel or labour to get any thing to pay their debt. Therefore when Christians are about to become Suerties for other men, they must first sit downe and wisely consider with themselues of these three pointes. First, thine own abilitie, if thou be a single man. Secondly, the estate and condition of thine owne familie, if thou haue one to looke vnto. Thirdly, the estate and condition of that partie for whom thou art to giue thy word.

3. things  
to bee  
considered  
in suertiship.

Thy owne abilitie is to be considered, for what wise man will vndertake to beare more thē he is able to carry? As in vowes to God, mē must cōsider whether it be in their power or no, to performe that which they vow, so in making of promises to men, thou must consider whe-

Our owne  
abilitie.

whether thou be able to performe that which thou hast promised, if it be required at thy hands : for when thou doest promise, thou must thinke that it may fall vppon thee by one meanes or other. Further, in regard of thy owne credit, it will stand thee in hand to looke to thy owne estate, as he that is about to build a house, must first sit downe and cast his account, whether he be able to finish it or no, lest when it is begun, it stand still Luk. 14. 28 at a staie, and so turne to the reproach of the builder.

Thy owne estate is further to be considered in respect of thy person, and in regard of thy profession : for if thou be not able to performe that which thou hast promised for an other man, then thy person must answer the matter in prison, or if the fairest come, thou art driuen for feare to keepe thy house, or with shame to flie thy countrey : which way so euer thou goest, be sure that feare, care, and shame, will attend vpon thee. And if thou be a yoong man, discredite wil hunt thee, but if thou be an old man, sorrow & grieve will surprise thy soule :

heauinesse will lodge in thy heart, vexation of spirit will be sawce to thy meate, and many troublesome thoughtes will busie thy head (if grace do not preuent them) and all these will gnaw vpon thee as a dog vpon a bone, vntil thy bones be dried vp, and thy health be decaied, and thy bodie be consumed, & thy strength be wasted, and thy heart be broken, and thy life ended, and thy olde age carried with dishonour to the graue, and therefore in regard of thy person, take heede what thou doest promise, lest thou become a murtherer of thy selfe.

2. Sam. 12.  
11.

Againe, thou must remember that when thy person is arrested, thy profession is also arested therewithall. Therefore, for thy profession sake thou shouldest looke vnto thy selfe, lest the name of God be euil spoken of by thy fal, as it was by *Dauids*. For what wil the enemy of the Gospell say? or rather, what will he not say to make the profession thereof to becom odious? Is this the man that was so strict & precise in all his waies? Is this the wisdom of the Gospel? & is this the life of a professor? doth it become a  
Christian

Christian to be so vnaduised ? or doth rashnesse and vaine glorie beseeme the sonnes of God ?

And surely it is no maruell, though religion thriue no better in many which are accounted good men : for through their rashnesse & foolish kindnesse, they are so ouer reached and entangled, that afterward their heads are wholly possessed with care, partly how to keep credit, and partly how to recouer themselues again: like the vniust steward in the Gospel Luke 16.3. that could not tel what to do whē he had wasted his maisters goods: to labour some cannot, & some wil not, and to beg some are ashamed. And, if there be no remedie, but either some protection must be procured, or some collection must be made for one that is decaied by suertiship (workes of charitie no doubt) but what infamie and slaunder do fall vnto the Gospell thereby, besides the wounding of many a weake conscience, who doth not see by daily and woful experience ? Thus we see how our profcission as wel as our person, doth earnestly craue this at our hands, that we will take heed,

how, and what, we do promise.

The 2. thing that a christian is to consider of before he become suertie, is the state of his owne familie, ouer which the lord hath made him an ouerseer. He is worse then an infidel saith the Apostle, and hath denied the faith which will not prouide for his familie, that is, for his wife, for his children and for his seruantes. Then what account shalbe made of thē that do whollie defeat their families of their right, or shal willingly & carelesly put that in hazard, which is already prouided for their maintenāce? Therefore as *S. Paul* saith, *Do good to all men, but especially to the household of faith.* So againe, he restraneth that doing of good, more especially to thy owne household, because he that doth not good especially to his own household, hath denied the faith. Therefore as *Ioseph* sent meat to all his brethren, so we must help (to our power) all our brethren, both according to the flesh, & according to the faith: but as *Beniamins* messe had five times so much as the rest of his brethren, because he loued him best. So our care must

Our familie.  
lie.

1. Tim. 5. 8.

Gal. 6. 10.

Gen. 43. 34

must be for our family, fīue times greater then for any body else, or else we cannot say that we loue our familie best. And whom should a man loue better then his owne wife and children? When the famine was in Samaria, the womē went to the king with their children in their armes, crying most pitifully, Helpe O king, we perish else: Some bread, O king we die else. Now euerie mā in his own family is as a king, whose office is not onely to make lawes for his family, but to prouide also all necessaries for the same. And when want shal come, to whō shall the wife go but to her husband, to whom shall the children go but to their father? to whō shall the seruant go, but to his maister? And wil not all of them call & cry vnto thee? Husband giue vs bread, or else we perish, shall thy wife say: father giue vs meate or else we die, shall thy children say, Maister giue me my meate & drinke, and giue me my wages, or else I starue, or else I must beg, shall thy seruant say. What a lamentable hearing wil this be? but what answere wilt thou giue vnto them? whē the wo-

2. King. 6.  
26.

man of Samaria cried vnto the king, his  
 1. King. 6. answer was: Seeing the Lord doth not  
 27. succour thee, how should I helpe thee  
 with the barne, or with the wine presse?  
 That is, seeing God doth deny thee meat  
 and drinke, how should I giue it thee?  
 but thou canst not say so, for God gaue  
 thee things necessarie for thy family, but  
 through thy folly & rashnesse, strangers  
 haue seized vpon them, therefore thou  
 maist say to thy own shame, and to their  
 litle comfort) O my wife and children,  
 seeing as suertiship hath eaten vp me,  
 how should I succour you? And (when  
 that day commeth) thou wilt saie, that  
 the mā which is brought into the fooles  
 paradise, by the allurements of a harlot,  
 is in as happy a case as thou art, and thou  
 art at as good a staie as he, and all one:

Prou. 5. 3. For the lips of a strange woman (saith Sa-  
 lomom) drop as an hony combe, & her mouth  
 is more soft then oyle, but the foolish man  
 4. doth not consider, that the end of her is but-  
 ter as wormewood, and sharp as a two edged  
 sword. So the lips of a strange man may  
 drop words vpon thee as sweet as hony,  
 and his mouth may be more soft then  
 oyle:

oyle: but remember & be wel aduised, for if thou haue a family, & thou be not able, the ende will be as bitter as wormewood, and sharpe as a two edged sword.

Therefore take now that counsel which is there giuen to that man, & that is this: Verse 8

If rashnesse & vainglory do entise thee, 9.

to be suertie for a straunger, or for anie 10.

bodie else to thy owne vndoing: Keepe 11.

thy way farre from them, and come not 12.

neare the doore of their house, lest thou giue thy honour vnto others, and thy

yeares vnto the cruell: lest the straunger should be filled with thy strength, & thy

labours be in the house of a straunger: and thou mourne at thy end, euen when

all is gone, and say: How haue I wanted [I say not hated] instruction, and my

heart despised correction. And thus we see, how our familie doth also request

this at our hands: namely, that we take great heed, both how, and for whom we

passe our promise.

The third thing that Christians are to consider of, in becomming suerties, is

the condition and dispositiō of the partie for whom he doth promise, for else

3.  
The party  
for whom

Iosh. 9. 6.

thou maist be soone ouerreached with counterfet cōpanions, as *Ioshua* was with the Gibeonites, who made him belecue that they had trauelled from a far, when indeed they dwelt fast by, so some in the world perhaps may make thee belecue that they are in more need thē they be, of purpose to deceiue thee. As *S. Paul* said

Tim.

to *Timothy* in another case; *Lay not hāds rashly vpon euery one:* so I say to thee, giue not thy hand rashly to euery one, but

In him cō-  
sider three  
things.

know him well. In the party for whom thou woldest be suerty, cōsider 3. things.

1. His cause. 2. His abilitie. 3. His religiō.

2. Kin. 5. 27

As touching his cause, so it be lawful before God and man, or else, the filthinesse therof wil cleaue vnto thee, as the leprosie of *Naamā* did cleaue to *Gebezi*. And he that vndertaketh for a bad man in a bad matter, shalbe suspected to be but little better thē an accessory vnto it: as for example: what if two be consenting in euil, & agreed vpō the price? as *Iudah* & *Thamar* his daughter in law were: *Iudah* promiseth *Thamar* akid of the goats, for the vnlawful vse of her body: who shalbe suerty for *Iudah* to *Thamar*, for the payment

Gen. 38.  
17. 18.

ment of the goat at the day appointed:  
or what if *Iudah* wold giue ready mony,  
that *Thamar* shall meete him in such a  
place at such a time, for such a purpose?  
who shal (without suspitiō of a common  
bawde) make promise for such a harlot?  
Again: what if a broker bring a gētle mā  
& the vsurer together for the loue of mo-  
ny, or the price of any fained cōmoditie?  
y gētle mā & the vsurer be agreed for the  
vsury, if he cā find suerties for M. vsurer.  
And what if thou be required to come in  
bonds for thy friend to the vsurer? Maist  
thou (knowing the case) without checke  
of cōscience, vphold them in sin? And he  
that is suertie for his neighbor in such a  
case, what doth he but hold his brother  
fast, that the vsurer like some wild beast  
may pray vpō. Therefore if thou become  
suertie for any, see whether his cause be  
good or no. Next, if the cause be good, see  
whether he be able to discharge thee or  
no, for who will giue his word y a beg-  
ger which goeth frō doore to doore, shal  
giue a 1000. pōūd for a purchase, except  
he meaneth to pay it himself? If the party  
be welthy, cōsider whether that abūdāce

54 *A Caueat for Suerties.*

of wealth which he possesseth, be his owne or no, or whether he came vnto it with a good conscience, ~~let~~ the spoiles of the poore come into thy possession, while thou become Suertie(perhaps) for a theefe, or for a vile person. And then feare lest the cry of the poore preuaile against both him & thee too. And know for a certaine, that the vengeance of the Almighty doth hang ouer thy house, while thou keep in possession the goods of other mē, although thou takest them to be his goods. As the plague of God hanged ouer the house of *Abimelech* the king of *Gerar*, for keeping of *Abrahams* wife, though he tooke her but for *Abrahams* sister, and therefore thought it lawful inough for him to keep her. And consider againe, that some are like the diuell in promising, for, as hee shewed Christ the kingdomes of the world and

Gen. 20. 6.  
7. said: *All these will I giue thee, if thou wilt fall downe and worshipping me*: when indeede he had no right to any part or parcell thereof. So it may be some may come to thee, or haue thee home, and shew thee a great deale more then is his owne, and say:

Mat. 4. 9.

say: All this wil I pledge to thee, if thou wilt be my Suertie for so much, &c. whē in truth it is not his to pledge, & then thou art in the briers. Therefore whē thou wouldest enter into Suertiship without any hurt to thy selte & thy family, know thy friend wel, & how able he is in truth to discharge thee.

So some  
cosoners  
come by  
their  
wiues

Last of all, if his cause be good, & his wealth his owne before God and man, then cōsider of his religion, that is, whether he be a man fearing God or no, and one that in truth without hypocrisie, worshippeth God: for he that is a stranger, or a professor of a strange religion, is the greatest stranger in the world, and he that is false to God, wil hardly be true to men, especially to those that are of a contrary religion, no more then *Hagar* Gen. 21. and *Sarah* could dwell quietly in one house together. And yet I deny not but an idolater, as Papists, &c. may, and many of them do keepe their word, and so do many of the Turkes, &c. keepe promise better then many others do. And this is but Sathans pollicie to credite a bad religion, with the shewe of a good.

life, as also to discredite the truth with some shew of euill in the professours of the same, & so much for thy friends cause, abilitie, & religiō. Many men complaine and sorrow for their goods, because they  
**Mat. 2. 18.** are gone from them, as *Rachel* mourned for her children because they were not, but they haue more cause to weepe then *Rachel* had, because she lost her children whē she could not keepe them, but they through their owne folly haue lost their goods when they might haue kept them still, for they were in their owne power  
**AA. 5. 4.** (as *Peter* said to *Ananias*) & they were no more cōstrained to giue their word, thē *Ananias* was compelled to lie vnto God.

Amongst men which complaine of their losses by sueriship, commonly the burden of their dolefull song is this: I will take heede while I liue how and for whom I giue my word againe: which in effect is but this much, if they had bene well aduised at the first, they had done wel enough. And so it is indeede, that for want of consulting with the word of God, it commeth to passe that many in a vaine vaine, to be couēted kind hearted,

ted (& I cannot tell what) do feed others till they starue themselves, they cloth others and goe naked themselves, they saue others from drowning, and sinke themselves, they discharge others and charge themselves, they also release others and lie by it themselves: what shall I say? they doe for others and vndoo themselves: like the builders of Noes Arke which prepared for others, Gen. 7. and perished themselves.

On the other side it commeth to passe, that they which listen to Gods counsell and follow that, they lend, and borrow not, they giue and take not, they feast and fast not, they redeeme others, and come in no bondage themselves: yea, they doe for others, and neuer vndoo themselves, but the more they helpe, the more they may helpe, like the blessed widow of Sarepta, whose oile and meale 1. King. 17. were no whit diminished, but rather en- 14. creased, and yet were daily spent of for 2. Kin. 4. 7. the nourishing of *Elias* and herselfe, all hir debts discharged. The reason hereof was this: if she had bestowed her meale and her oile vppon euerie one that had

come, without respect of persons, to haue bene counted a good fellow, or a kind hearted woman (as the manner of some is) no doubt but all had bene consumed long before: but she kept her liberalitie for *Elias* the Lords Prophet, who was in great distresse, and could nowhere else be relieved but at her hands: and then she succoured him according to her poore abilitie, of loue and conscience for the Lordes sake, and therefore the Lord blessed her. So let vs do, & God will likewise blesse vs: wouldest thou then giue to others and not want thy selfe? wouldest thou redeeme others and be at libertie thy selfe? wouldest thou feede others, and not starue thy selfe? wouldest thou reioice others, & not mourne thy selfe? In a word (because the duties of loue are infinit) wouldest thou do for others and not vndo thy selfe? then giue not to al, lend not to all, prouide not for all, promise not for all, lest in the end thou be driuen to pay for all, and then be constrained to beg of all, not onely thy goods but thy selfe too, when thou shalt be shut vp, and thrust

out

out from the companie of all: but giue to those to whom God hath appointed thee to giue, and God will giue it thee againe: help those whom God hath sent vnto thee to be relieued, and that according to thy abilitie, and God will helpe thee againe. To conclude this point, be thou aduised by thy heauēly father, and take counsell of his word: and in so doing thou shalt both saue thy selfe, and helpe others.

The finnes which Gods spirit reprobeth in suerties are especially two: the one is ambition, the other is rashnesse, the one begetteth the other, when a mā's friend commeth vnto him, he giueth his word, because hee would seeme to be courteous and kind hearted, to be praised of men, not considering whether he be able to discharge it or no, nor his familie, nor the disposition of the partie: this is ambitious and vaine glorious vanity which poisoneth all, euen our best actions. And herein they are not unlike the builders of Babel, who would make a tower whose top should reach to heauen, and onely

Two things to be avoided by Suerties.

1. Ambition.

2. Rashnes

Gen. 11.

cause they vndertake that (in the pride of their heart) which is aboue their reach: therefore they must looke that Babel (that is to say, confusion) shall fall vpon their heads.

But this is our comfort, that God hath geuen to his children such grace as they will neuer let it raigne in them, but will alwaies beate it downe, and kepe it vnder, that they may say as *Dauid* said, **Psal. 41.** *By this I know (O Lord) that thou louest me, because my enemy doth not triumph against me.* So by this Gods children do know, that God doth loue them, not because vainglorie doth neuer trouble them, but because this enemy of ambition doth not triumph against them.

The Philosophers are wot to say, *Gloria calcar habet*, that is, they account vainglorie a spurre, and a pricke to help forward a sharpe witte: and so do our profane professors think it a good thing too, that it be done wisely and handsomly (as the manner of some men is to dispraise the giftes and graces of God in themselves purpose onely to heare other men praise them, and commend

mend them : and this is a prettie kind of seeking after ambition and vanitie.

It is a good thing (I confesse) for men to see soberly and modestly, what gifts God hath bestowed vpon them : but to giue the glorie to God, and see that we seeing the mercies of God in vs, may with sobrietie and modestie bee stirred vp to vse the giftes, and graces of God in vs to the glorie of God.

The 2. sin (with which Suerties are o-  
uertaken) is rashnesse, that is, when wee Rashnesse  
promise for him that we know not : and rashnesse commeth of ambitiō, for ambition is the root of rashnesse : therefore when we haue done any thing rashly, let vs suspect that ambition went before. Therefore to escape this rocke of mischiefe *Salomons* counsel is to be folowed, Prou. 4. 26.  
*Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy waies be ordered aright : for a good man is mercifull and lendeth* (saith *Dauid*) but Psal. 112. 8  
therewith he addeth, that he ordereth all his affaires, iudgement and deliberation to teach vs, that all things done rashly and vaingloriously are euer out of order, because discretion is wanting, which

should marshall them, and set them in order: & where there is no order in our dealinges, what can wee looke for but confusion in the ende.

Now let vs see brieflie how men in ancient time became Suerties one for another. It appeareth in the wordes of the Text, that they did but strike handes together, and giue their word one to another, whereby they were so snared, that they could not breake their bondes.

Such was the simplicitie of ancient times, in making of bargaines: which practice bewraileth the notable trecherie of our time, which is such, that no bond or writing is so sure for molt men now, as the touching of the hand, or speaking the word was then. Men think that fraud doth so ouerflow, that the cannot vse too many words in their bonds, and bargaines. And on the contrarie side they thinke that fraud lyeth and lurketh in multitude of words: and that they be fit matter for wrangling heads to worke vppon. And yet as men do sweare much because one man wil not trust another, so in bargaining men do

vse manie words, because one man doth  
vse to deccae another. Whatsoever is  
added in communication (saith the Lord  
Iesus) more then yea and nay, is of the  
Deuill. So in bargaining, whatsoever  
is vrged more then a mans promise, it  
doth shew, that there is falshood and de-  
ceite in the world. Math. 5.

It was most for the Centurions cre-  
dit, when he said to Christ: *Lord trou-  
ble not thy selfe to come home vnto me, only  
speake the word, and my seruant shal be  
whole.* So likewise this would make most  
for the credit of Christians, if we could  
say one to another, trouble not your  
selfe for bondes making, &c. Onely  
speake the word, and I do beleue you:  
But deceit delighteth in multitude of  
wordes, and starting holes, when truth  
seeketh no corners like *Balaam* ( whose  
false heart sought for a bribe & therefore  
he must haue seuen alters built here, &  
seuen more built there, and vpon euery  
alter must be offred forsooth a bullock,  
and a ramme, and partly to couer his  
owne hipocrisie, and partly to deliuer  
the king of *Moab* (as Monkes and Luke 7.  
Num. 24. 1

Friers deluded men in poperie) wheras indeed he knew before how the matter stood.

Furthermore in the Text it is said, *that the Suertie was taken and snared with the wordes of his mouth.* Now wordes are counted but wind: and men will aske, what haue you to shew for it? &c. but wordes are bondes and snares that men cannot vntie: and *Salomon* noteth that a man is taken with the wordes of his mouth as sure as with an obligation, that he cannot breake it without trecherie, by which we may perceiue that God seeth all our wordes, and will call vs to reckoning for them.

Againe, some will say, it is no howling among Wolues, he is a cosoner, &c. he beguiled me with deceit, and therefore I will meet with him, let him get it how he can, &c. so because (fraud is driuen out with fraud) they thinke themselues discharged. But here Gods spirit meeteth with such fellowes: for because thou wert ambitious or rash, & not so circumspect as thou shouldest haue bene. And forasmuch as the follie of

of thine owne mouth hath entangled thee: therefore thou must stand to it. If he had lied vnto thee, and so deceaued thee, the law would haue helped thee. In other finnes, we are readie to lay the fault vpon others as *Adam* did, but now it will not be, thou art holden with the cordes of thine owne sinne: for howsoeuer others did entice thee, thou hast lurking finnes in thine owne heart, *Psal. 19.* which *Dauid* called his secret finnes.

If we were so precise and strict as we ought to bee in all our waies, none could deceaue vs, for no man is hurt but of himselfe, and (as *Saint Paul* saith) euerie man is tempted, when hee is drawen away and entised by his owne concupiscence. It is impossible that the secret thoughtes of another should hurt vs, as wee thinke: no man maketh a snare for him selfe, and whatsoeuer euill is in vs, it commeth from our owne heart. Therefore it is in vain for men to trāsferre their finnes vnto others, and say this and that, &c. but know that thine own sinne hath brought thee to that that thou art come vnto: *Thou*

Text.  
vers.3

art snared with the words of thine owne mouth: and so much brieflie of the simplicitie which was vsed in ancient time in barginning and becomming of Suertie one for another, as also the trecherie of our time, because no man will trust another. Now let vs see what counsell God giueth vnto such men as are snared with suertiship, which followeth in the 3. verse in these wordes. *Do this now my son, & deliuer thy selfe, seeing thou art come into the hand of thy neighbour, go and humble thy selfe, & sollicite thy friends &c.*

In this third verse, wee see the fatherlieloue of God and of *Salomon* to the sonne. He first checketh him with the wordes of his owne mouth: *Thou seest howv thou art taken vvith thine ovvne vvords, and snared in thine ovvne follie:* thou must take it to thy selfe. Then hauing thus checked him for his fault he doth not here leaue him to himselfe, but giueth him a remedie.

By this practise of the holie Ghost in *Salomon* are manie reprehended which will say when men are in trouble, thou  
through

through thine owne follie hast brought thy selfe into trouble, get out as thou canst for all me.

They will lay out the follie of their brethren and set their sinnes before thē, but they wil not helpe to binde vp their woundes, like the good Samaritane. They can point and laugh at the nakednesse of their bretheren, as *Ham* that cursed child of *Noah* did at his fathers nakednes, but they will not take any paines Gen 9.22. to couer their nakednesse, as blessed *Sem* 23. and *Japheth* did.

But on the cōtrarie the godly wil help Gal.6.1. vp their brethrē which are fallē through occasion, & that with the spirit of meeknesse considering themselves (as the Apostle saith) lest they also be tempted. And here is a holy difference betweene charitable vpbraiding, and vncharitable condēning. For *Sathā* can tel mē of their follie, & when they are down he can lay loads vpon them: yea it is his ioy to see the children of God vnder feet; & surely it is a deuillish imitation when men see their brethrē down, they wil check them, but they will not put their little finger

to helpe them vp againe. And this (I say) is a verie deuillish imitation indeede. It is farre otherwise with the children of God, they imitate their mercifull God and Father in heauen, for God indeede will not spare his people, but hee will also tell them how to rise againe, as in *Esay* the 1. When the Lord had told the Iewes of their hipocrisie, and with what bloudie handes and hautes they kept his sabboths, his new Moones and other daies appointed, all which his soule did abhorre, because of their wickednes, yet in the end he saith: *Wash you and be cleane, and then let vs reason together, & then though your sinnes were as red as scarlet, yet I will make them as white as snow.* So the children of God will tell their brethre of their sinnes, and raise the vp againe to their power, and comfort the with the bloud of Iesus Christ: For if there be charitie in vs, we wil not choke them with their sinnes but admonish them of their sinnes. And in any case wee must take heede that we do not so presse them downe, as that there be no rounge for our handes to go vnder to lift

lift them vp againe.

And we must not rebuke them slanderlie neither, but lay out thy brothers sinnes to the most, that when hee shall see them vncafed and vnfolded hee may see the hiddē mischiefs that were wrapped vp in them before, and so take better heede of them another time, but still take pitie of him.

Now men wil charge the preacher with railing & malice; & I know not what, if he be earnest in rebuking mens sinnes, and in telling thee what the Lord saith as to ring the larum bel, when he seeth the enemy comming vpō thee: but how can this be? Is *Paul* become your enemy because he telleth you the truth? what? doth the Preacher reprove thy faultes? he doth so: but doth hee not also giue thee a remedie for thy sinne, as he rebuketh thy sinne? why dost thou say then, hee hath a delight to checke and and taunt, and to be girding at thee when thy conscience is bitten a little?

And this also sheweth how man ought to deale with man, & thou oughtest to make a profite of thy verie ene-

E ij.

mies, as men make phisicke of poisons. For thine enemies will tell thee of that which thy worldly frendes will not tell thee for feare they should displease thee, and although he speake in enmie and malice vnto thee (which is his fault) yet see whether it be so, and then know, that God hath opened his eies for thy welfare, as he opened the mouth of *Balaams Ass* for the good of his master.

Num. 23.

Gods counsell to  
Suerties.  
Vers. 3.  
Vers. 4.

Now to the counsell it selfe, wherein we haue to obserue two thinges.

First, what be the particular points thereof. Secondly, what be the reasons for the same. As touching the particular points of the counsell which God giueth vnto Suerties they are three.

1. *Go humble thy selfe.* 2. *Sollicite thy frends.* 3. *Giue no sleepe to thine eies, nor slumber to thine eyelids.*

First he saith, *Go humble thy selfe* his meaning is, that hee must go to his creditor, & in good words submit himselfe to his curtesie, crauing some respite to pay the debt, or the thing that was promised. This is hard counsell, if wee consider to whom it is giuen, namely to  
an

ambitious minded mā, that stands vpon his credit, such a one as wil not heare cōmonly of any such matter for stomach, but indeed (saith God by *Salomon*) this is the way, *to go and humble thy selfe*, and to beat downe that ambitious humor, yea, if thou goest in silks and veluets, or if thou wearest gold and siluer, this is the counsell that God giueth thee: *Go and humble thy selfe*. But the world can shift it many waies better then this: shal I go and humble my selfe saith one? not I, I cā cōuey away my goods vnder a colution, & a false title, & then let him do what he cā, & this is a cunning shift: whē search is made, ther is nothing to be fōūd but a blocks end & a pillow stufte with goats haire. Shal I go hūble my self, saith another? not I, I wil go to prison and lie ther while I liue, rather thē I wil pay the debt: I wil hold him tack with his owne. So there they wil lie & spēd their creditors money. And surely this is a spitefull shift, and a common shift of all banckrupts, wil they go humble thēselues and seek for fauor? no: then wil they build & go brauely in their extreame pouertie.

Of shifting  
debtors.  
The 1. sort

2. sort,

A spitefull  
shift of  
banck-  
rupts.

And when they owe a thousand pound more then they are worth, they will defie their creditors to their face, & set all at fixe and seuen, thinking that they can but goe to prison. These men seeke to ouerthrow all lawes, they will do what they list, they will spende other mens money at dice and cardes, they can delude the lawes, and mock magistrates in despight of their teeth.

Therefore these men would be hamperd by the godly magistrate: for the prison ought not to be a place of pleasure for bankrupts and cosoners to liue in as the list in spending of their owne goods and their creditors also.

Others will humble themselues before they neede, & all to defraude other men of their right. They can cunningly agree for iiij. s. in the pound, or such a trifle, paying a litle for a great deale, truly these are intollerable in a commonwelth, for these men when they owe a hundred, or a thousand, can handle the matter so handfomly that their creditors shalbe driuen to say, take thy bil & write but fiftie, or twentie, or ten, not like

A third  
sort.

like the vniust steward who had wasted his maisters goods, but like vniust debtors which can paie, but will not. And when they haue agreed with men for little or nothing, they can set vp their saile againe, and liue as merily as can be, but then the wise Magistrate, and other men may see their hipocrisie, and constraine them to paie to euery byrd his owne feather againe. These fellowes are lyke the counterfait and cosoning Gibeonites, who made *Ioshua* belecue that they came Iosh. 9. 21. from a farre country, when they dwelt hard by, and by their old bottles, moulded bread, and ragged cloathes, seemed to him poorer by many degrees, then they were indeed: but when they were once knowne, *Ioshua* set them to draw water, and to hew wood for all the congregation of *Israel*, & if these men were serued so too, *Ioshua* should do well. verse. 4. For that which the Gibeonites did, was for exceeding feare of their liues, but that which these fellowes do, is of a couetous affectiō to saue their goods, and of a malicious intent to deceiue their creditors, which is a cursed thing in the sight of

God and man.

But the poore debter can take no better course, then to goe and humble himselfe. And if we stand so much vpon our selues, that we wil not stoupe, we are vnworthy to be helped. And surely, he that will not stoupe to help himselfe, hath no charitie in him to helpe another: for now he is cōstrained to help himselfe, and if he will not yeeld, when he is thus bitten, he will not yeeld, nor stoupe, nor yet once cast his eyes vppon his poore neighbour to helpe him at his need, or to lift him out of the dust. And there is no childe of God, but if he hath any bowels of mercy in him, wil be good to his poore debter, when he doth thus humble himselfe vnto him. And he that will not shew him mercy when he doth hūble himselfe Scencreat for mercy, surely that hard hearted man must looke for no mercy himselfe, either of God or man. For seeing as the Lord hath pitie on vs to forgiue vs all, ought not we also to haue pitie on our fellowes and brethren, if not to forgiue them all, yet at the leastwise to forbear them, till they may be able

able to paie? But he that will take his  
 poore debter by the throate, and say pay Mat. 18. 32  
 that thou owest, or else thou shalt lye in 33-34  
 prison till thou rottest, and I will make  
 dice of thy bones except thou do paie  
 me. Now verely God shall shut vp the  
 harts of other men against him likewise,  
 when he is in distresse, and God himselfe  
 shall take him by the throat, as it were,  
 and deliuer him vp to the iayler of hell  
 (if he repent not) neither shall he come  
 foorth vntil he hath paid the vttermolt  
 farthing. For this is a principle neuer to  
 be altered: *There shalbe iudgement merci-* Iam. 2. 13.  
*lesse, to him that sheweth no mercy.*

*Go and humble thy selfe:* Humilitie is  
 contrary to pride, and to be humbled, is  
 contrary to being exalted. And he that  
 exalteth himselfe shalbe brought lowe,  
 saith the scripture, but he that humbleth  
 himselfe shalbe exalted. Now therefore  
 here let vs note againe, that *Salomon* dea-  
 leth with such a one as careth not how  
 farre he rusheth. And therefore he rebu-  
 keth him, because he seeketh for nothing  
 but for credit: this was because he was  
 not humbled, a proud folly. But marke

how low God bringeth him, he would be aloft: now God biddeth [Him] come downe, and humble himselfe, who before thought to set himselfe aloft by a vaine kindnesse. Now are the words of *Salomon* found true: *When pride commeth, then commeth shame*: but with the lowly is wisdom, to shew that all proude men are but fooles. Again, in another place he saith: *The pride of a man shall bring him low, but the humble in spirit shall enjoy glorie*. So here, his pride was so great, that he cared not what danger he did incur, so he might be counted kinde and liberrall, & I know not what. And thus doth God deale with his childrē, and though he were thus ouershot, yet he calleth him his sonne, that is applicable to doctrine, and giuen to serue God. Whereby we may note, that ambition waiteth vpon Gods children, as the shadow doth vpon the bodie: yea, they haue a continuall battle with it, for the force thereof is not so soone abated, but therefore God doth as it were, pricke the bladder, and let out their windinesse. This humour wayted on *Peter*, when he boasted to dye with Christ,

Pro. 11.3.

Pro. 29.23.

Mat. 26.69

Christ, for not long after, this vaine man was brought to shame, his courage was cooled, and his bladder prickt, that his proud winde went out at the voice of a silly damosell. Thus we see how pride and shame go together foote by foote: for shame was not long after this vaine brag which *Peter* made in the fond conceit of his owne strength. Now, if this did so grow vp in a greene tree ful of the sap of Gods spirit, what is in the dry and seare trees, which haue nothing of the spirit of God? truly though they see it not now, yet their pride shalbe their confusion, and shame shal fall vppon them, when credit and estimation (which they so much hunt after,) shal flie away from them.

But now, some wil say: shal I be humble? why then all men wil tread vppon me, and no man wil esteeme me. Indeed

Obiect.

Answer.

the wicked wil like of none but such as ioyne with them in the purchase of folly and shame, and they speake euil of all that wil not run with them to the same excesse of ryot, and therefore they speake euil of them saith the Apostle *Peter*. But

1. Pet. 4. 4.

if

if weioyne with the proud, and will not come vnder the yoke of humilitie, it is the next way to bring shame vpon our heads, for God himselfe doth make war with the proud, and wil bend their owne bowes against their faces : so y<sup>e</sup> the next way to get glorie is, to go by the way of humilitie, for as *Salomon* saith, *That pride bringeth shame*, so if thou be hūble, thou  
*Iob 22.29.* shalt say, *I am lifted vp (saith Iob) when others are cast downe*, for god shal saue the hūble person: as if he shuld say, the humble mā indeed is vnder euery bodie's feet, that none would thinke he shuld escape, but yet he shalbe lifted vp, for God himselfe will saue him. We vse to say, it is good beating a proud man : for indeed pride is odious, that it is abominable in all sorts of men. The children of God cā not abide him, nor the wicked cannot abide a proud man, & in the end God wil set a greater iudgement vpon him, for *Abfoloms* haire shalbe *Abfoloms* halter, and the proud shalbe troden downe vnder the feete of God, to the bottome of hell, which is without bottome, therefore  
*(My sonne) go, and humble thy selfe.*

The

The 2. part  
of Gods  
counsell.

The second part of Gods counsell is this: *Sollicite thy friends*. Some thinke this to be read in the plurall number, but it is not so, though it may be so. Sollicite thy friend or thy neighbor (as *Tremelius* saith) that is, stir him vp (for whom thou hast giue thy word) & neuer leaue him vntil he hath paid his debt & discharged thee.

This point noteth out, how carelesse the world is, whē they haue vnburdened themselves vpon other mens shoulders, for then they sleep sincerely vpon both elbowes, not caring how their debt be paid, nor how their friend may be discharged. There is thē no respect of Christianitie, no respect of their own profit, & as litle regard of their brothers profit. They care not, sincke he or swim he, many are at a point: therefore we must haue a care whom we take to be our friends.

Again, some wil say, I had rather loose it, then aske it so often. This may seem at the first sight a good affection, & indeed it may be so, in some childrē of god, for it is not good to be too churlish like *Naball*: but for the most part, it is a signe of ambition in manie men, for they are

So ambitious y<sup>t</sup> they wil not, because they would be counted patient & kind harted, &c. But indeed here is a fault in neglecting and loosing of that which God hath sent thee for thy selfe, and for thy family. And here God teacheth vs, that it is no shame to aske our owne, but that we may aske it, yea and that we ought to be euen vrgent in the cause.

The third  
part of  
Gods coun-  
sel.  
Verse 4.

The third part of Gods counsell is in the fourth verse. *Giue no sleepe to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eye lids, &c.* Some think they may rest, if they haue spoken once to him, for whom they haue promised: no, no, it is not inough, thou must not leaue, till he haue found some remedie to paie his debts, & that is the meaning of this point. For the burthen of a promise is so great, that wee ought not to sleep, till we haue found out some remedie to performe that promise, for *Dauid* saith, he is a iust mā that seeketh to keep his promise, though it be to his own hinderance. But he sets the contrarie, as a brande vppon a wicked mans forehead, and makes it a note to knowe a wicked man by. *The wicked borroweth, and paieth*

Psal. 15.

Psal. 37. 21

*not againe*, but the good man is merciful and lendeth; to shewe that how soeuer there is mercy and goodnesse in lending to our brother in time of neede, yet he that borroweth must haue a care to restore againe at the day: but if hee shall thinke all fish that commeth to his net (as the maner of some is) the holy Ghost hath branded that man for a cruel and a wicked man. And therefore, as holy soeuer as wee pseeme to be, if this bein vs, there is no feare of God before our eies. And therefore we must not onely paie, but strue to paie at the daie, for God wil haue mercy, and not sacrifice, mercy I meane, in paying to others that which is their owne. If thou canst not, (being preuented in the meane time, as thou maiest by sicknesse, or losses vnlooked for, &c.) then signifie so much vnto thy Creditor, go and humble thy selfe vnto him at the least. And so much shortly, for the third point of Gods counsell vnto Suerties, and not only to Suerties, but to all debtors, and whosoever else maketh anie promise vnto his neighbour.

Verse.5.

The reason of the counsell.

The reason of the former counsell, followeth in the next verse : *Deliuier thy selfe as a Doe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

The effect of the reason is this, If we do follow Gods counsell, deliuerance will come vnto vs, but if we do not follow it, destruction wil come vpon vs. And it standeth thee in hande to looke about thee, if thou be in suertiship: For as easily shall the Doe escape out of the hunters hands, and a bird out of the hand of the fowler, as thou shalt get out of some mens bonds, whē thou art once in them. And therfore follow Gods counsell, and afterward be as wary of their wiles and snares, as the Doe is of the hunter, or the bird of the fowler. And therefore thou oughtest to be wary and verie circumspect, because the world is full of fowlers and hunters, which are not without their snares, their ginnes, their trappes, and their huntsmen. But by the way, we may obserue here, that the best way to escape them is the way of God, or else no way: therefore he which walketh according to the word of God, doth walke  
most

most safely : neither is there any man so entangled, but by vsing of Gods meanes in his word, and relying vppon Gods promises, he may escape and get at libertie againe : for God blesseth his owne meanes, when all waies else shall be accursed.

In this verse he compareth couetous men, craftie heads, and cruell persons, to hunters and fowlers, because they go about to praie vppon simple men. There be of hunters, as there be of fishers, some are hunters of beastes, and some of men, as *Peter* was a fisher of men, but there is great difference. Some are called mightie hunters, as *Nimrod* was, some are called cunning hunters, as *Esau* was. So, of these hunters whereof *Salomon* speaketh, some be mightie hunters as *Nimrod* was. Whereof some hunt for the goods, some for the offices, some for the liuings, and some for the liues of men : Of which the Prophet *Michah* complaineth in his time. 7. Chapter, Verse 2. *The good man*

Gen. 10. 9.  
Gen. 25. 27

Mich. 7. 2.

is perished out of the earth, there is none righteous among men: they all lye in vvaite for blood, euery man hunteth his brother

*with a net.* These are ful of craft & cruel-  
 rie, craftie, because they hunt with nets,  
 that is, with deuises hidden and couered  
 as nets be: cruell, because they lie in wait  
 for blood. And therefore in *Jeremy*, the  
 enemies of Gods people (with whom  
 there is no mercie) are called hunters. *I*  
*Jer. 16. 16.* *will send out many hunters* saith the Lord,  
*and they shall hunt them from euery moun-*  
*tain, & fro euery hill, & out of the caues of*  
*the rockes.* Now if we hunt our brethren  
 with nets as they did in *Micha* his daies,  
 let vs feare lest the Lord send out manie  
 hunters to hunt vs, as he did threaten  
 his people in *Jeremy* his daies.

The fowler also laith nets for the fowle,  
 and to these are flatterers compared in  
*Prov. 29. 5.* *Amā that flattereth his neigh-*  
*bour spreadeth a net for his steps.* Some-  
 time men are called not onely fowlers  
 which lay nets, but the verie nets and  
 snares themselues as though the Deuill  
 were the fowler, and men were his nets,  
 and snares to catch soules withall: such  
 were the wicked gouernors, the flatte-  
 ring teachers, and the deceitfull people  
 of Israel, against whom the Prophet

*Hose*

*Hose* denounceth the iudgemēt of God, *Hose. 5. 6* because they had bene a snare on *Miz-pah*, and a net spread vpon *Tabor*.

When a simple man walketh in the streets, and heareth how men call chapmen, & offreth them good peniworths, let him take heed, because a net is spread. Of these fowlers the Prophet *Ieremie* complaineth thus: *As a cage is full of Birdes, so are their houses full of deceit: thereby they are become great, and waxen rich.*

The fowle is in danger many waies, for if he flie from one, he is in danger of another, either of the net which is couered, or of the limetwigs, or of the peece which cometh creeping vnto him as though hee did him great obeisance.

Some are like sparrow catchers that sit vnder the hedge with their cal counterfeiting in such sort the sparrows note, that the poore birdes resort vnto him, thinking it to be one of their own companie. So, many can so cunninglie be-mone the wants of others, as if they had but one heart, and one voice betweene

them both, which deceiueth many a simple man.

**Pro. 19.**

Some by extreme couenants & bargaines do seaze vppon goods, lands, bodies and liues too if they might be suffered, like the Scribes and Pharisees which vnder pretēce of long praier, deuoure widowes howses. *Such are the vvaies of euerie one that is greedie of gain (saith Salomon) he wvould take away the life of the owners thereof. In Esay these persons are compared to millstones which grind the corne to powder: What haue yee to do, that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poore, saith the Lord, euen the Lord of hostes.*

**Esa. 3. 15.**

**Mic. 3. 3.**

In *Micah* these people are compared to wolues, or to some other rauenuous beast: *They plucke off their skinnies from them, and their flesh from their bones. And they eate also the flesh of my people, and flay off their skin from them, and they break their bones, & chop them in pieces, as to the pot, and as flesh within the Caldron.*

They are worse then beastes, yea worse then wilde and any sauadge beast; for though beastes do rauen being hungry

ye

yet they giue ouer when they are full:  
but couetousnesse is neuer satisfied.

*Deliuier thy selfe as a Doe from the hand  
of the hunter, &c.*

The practises that are now vsed in the  
world, do make this propertie of hun-  
ters and fowlers to fit couetous men  
verie wel: for first, how do they hunt to  
entrap vnaduised men in bonds for hou-  
ses and landes? Secondly, how do cre-  
ditors perswade their debtors, and make  
the get some to pay their desperat debt?

And this is a subtile pollicie, *Dauid*  
doth notably paint out these men in the  
10. Psalme vers. 8. 9. 10. *Hee lieth in waite  
in the villages: in the secret places doth hee* *Psalm. 10. 8. 9.*  
*murther the innocent: his eyes are bent a-* *10.*  
*gainst the poore.* 9. *Hee lieth in waite se-*  
*cretly, euen as a Lion in his den, he lieth in*  
*waite to spoile the poore, he doth spoile the*  
*poore, when he doth draw him into his net.*  
10. *Hee croucheth and boweth: therefore*  
*heaps of poore do fall by his might.* So play  
these couetous vsurers, which liue vpon  
extortion, and feede vpon the people,  
eating them as if they were bread. And  
in their drunken matches, how do they

wrap men in their boundes?

How are yong gentlemen and vnrifhts taken in the vsurers nets, and the broker is his bawd & the huntsman too. The broker can feed a yong gentleman & emptie his purse as fast as he can fill it and all at the brothell howses: hee shall want none: but surely he shall buy his gold too deare: therefore take heede of these fowlers and hunters.

It is a sin to venture rashly into their handes, God hath forewarned you to flee from the couetous, and yet you will venture, therefore are you not iustly serued, if you be deuoured of them?

Some say they must needs deale with the vsurer, they cannot liue else, and vsurie is counted no sinne: but thou must be then iustly plagued and deuoured all that thou hast, because thou wilt not follow Gods counsell.

Againe, on the other side: If it bee a sinne to bee wittingly deceiued, how much greater sinne is it to deceiue wittingly and willingly?

Therefore consider thus with thy selfe if I would haue no man lay snares and  
nets

Lettes for me, then I must laie none for others. He that deceiueth a simple man, doth not him so much mischief, as he hath himselfe. The simple man is deceiued, but the hunter, & the fowler is more deceiued: for while he hunteth after the poore silly man, the diuell hunteth after his soule. And if his soule be caught in the snares of the diuel, had he not better loose all the world? *For what shall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and loose his ouerne soule?*

Mat. 16. 26

Last of all, here we may learne to be very careful for our soules. For if the spirit of God be so carefull to make vs take heed of him that hunteth after our goods: how much more would he haue vs to take heed of him that hunteth after our soules? They are foolish and blockish, that can seeke to escape the snares of mē, and yet neuer seeke to escape the snares of the diuel. If we must take heed of the earthly fowler, much more of the hellish fowler. This maketh the childrē of God so sad, and to be so troubled in spirit as they are manie times, because they see that they are takē in the snares of Sathan.

G

For can the prisoner sleepe so quiet  
with his boltes vpon him, as when  
at libertie? The wicked are taken  
it not, but go on as though they were  
libertie, as some fish being taken of  
fisher goeth on at his scope, with  
hooke in his belly: & at last he is taken.  
We are all taken in his snares euery  
day, but through the blood of Iesus  
Christ we are set at libertie againe, if  
haue faith in his name: blessed be God  
for euer. And thus much of the reason  
of that counsell which God giueth  
to Suerties: and thus much be  
spoken of Suertiship  
if selfe.

*FINIS.*

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